



ISSUE BRIEF

VICTIM NOTIFICATION

The Department of Corrections (DOC) has been responsible for victim notification since the early 2000s. DOC is very sensitive to those living with the trauma of victimization and prioritizes their timely and reliable notification of adult in custody (AIC) status.

DOC entered a contract with APPRISS, owner of VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday), in 2007. When the contract was established with APPRISS, APPRISS was the sole provider of the services necessary to deliver an automated victim notification system. In August of 2021, Equifax purchased Appriss Insights for \$1.825 billion. Currently, other options in the marketplace provide similar or superior products and services at competitive prices – delivering substantial cost savings and a more efficient, accurate, and real-time exchange of information.

The Need to Change Vendors

Unfortunately, VINE relies on outdated technology and data exchanges that use physical devices located at each county. These devices can go offline and cause delayed notifications. The VINE system requires registrants to create a personal account to access the full features of the VINE system. DOC is aware data transmitted by this program may also be utilized by other information distribution networks.

Vendor Search

Because of the ongoing issues with the VINE system, DOC embarked on market research to evaluate potential alternatives to the system in early 2020. During that research, DOC interviewed five other states to determine how they addressed the replacement of their notification systems. Information was gathered about the specific factors each state used in decision-making including cost, feature sets, ease of transition, customer service, and more. In addition, DOC conducted its own evaluation of vendors and products including both internal and external information technology contacts. All were vetted for capability, timely engagement, technology, ease of operation, and resilience.

Procurement Process

As required for an information technology investment of this size, DOC engaged the Department of Administrative Services, Enterprise Information Services (EIS), and has been actively working with EIS through the stage gate oversight process since January 2022.

In the first quarter of 2022, DOC began the procurement process and elected to utilize a federal cooperative agreement, the General Services Administration (GSA) Schedule 70. Using a cooperative agreement, if available, often reduces the time and money needed to procure goods and services. DOC complied with the requirements of the GSA in its selection of a contractor and chose InfoStrat.

DOC posted its notice of intent to participate in a federal cooperative agreement and award a contract under the GSA Schedule 70 on August 30, 2022, on OregonBuys as required by Oregon Revised Statute 279A.180. No protests were received.

DOC's contract with APPRISS provides for transition services and will expire on October 30, 2023. With the signed contract with InfoStrat in place, DOC intends to stand up the new notification system VISOR (Victim Information System in Oregon) and run it parallel to APPRISS' VINE system for a period to insure operational mirroring and functionality before full implementation. Current VINE registrants will continue to receive notifications without interruptions during and after the transition. VISOR will go live on October 31, 2023.

Service Improvements to Victims

Based on conversations with the five other states and DOC's own market research, improvements to victim notification through InfoStrat will be accomplished in at least the five following ways:

1. Real-time data exchange will enable real-time notifications allowing DOC to provide more value, safety, and peace of mind to end-users.
2. VISOR's modern user-interface will be easier to navigate. Registrants will have the ability to manage their notifications, make changes themselves, and locate information more naturally.
3. Registrant data will be more secure by being stored and maintained in-house and unavailable for use by other information distribution networks.
4. Modern architecture and the potential for self-hosted solutions provide flexibility for enhancements and modifications if changes are required from the legislature or end-users in the future.
5. Notification scripts to registrants can be immediately updated and delivered in the event of emergencies, such as natural disasters, without delay.

VISOR will provide a substantially more modern, user-friendly, timely, and efficient solution to end-users at a significantly reduced cost. This aligns with the Governor's and the State's guidelines to reduce government financial spending and replace or modernize outdated technology.

[www.oregon.gov/DOC/Victim Services](http://www.oregon.gov/DOC/Victim_Services)

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8/2023